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ABSTRACT

To investigate the relationship of women's role choices, role satisfaction, and self-esteem to their perceptions of their earlier relationship with their mothers and to their perceptions of their mothers' roles and role satisfaction, 67 women between the ages of 28 and 38, married and college educated with preschool children, participated in this study. Women's role choices and aspects of their current life were assesed via interview. In addition, the women completed a self-report packet containing the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory, a retrospective questionnaire about the mother in her various roles, and the Children's Report of Parental Behavior Inventory. Results indicated that the women's primary role decision of career, work, or homemaking did not parallel those of their mothers, but was related to their mothers' messages to them. Career women and women at home reported having more choice in their decisions than did working women. Further, the career women's choices were more often influenced by teachers, especially female teachers. Finally, women's self-esteem and role satisfaction were significantly enhanced when the relationship with the mother was perceived as loving and accepting, with low hostility and low psychological control. In contrast, women's self-esteem and role satisfaction were generally unrelated to the retrospective reports of the mothers' roles and role satisfaction. (Author)

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Women's Sense of Self and Life Choices: A Study of Mother-Daughter Relationships

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Abstract

This study investigates the relationship of women's role choices, role satisfaction and self-esteem to their perceptions of the earlier relationship with their mothers and to their perceptions of their mothers' roles and role satisfaction. Sixty-seven women between the ages of 28 and 38, married and college educated with preschool children, participated in this study. Women's role choices and aspects of their current life were assessed via interview. In addition, the women completed a self-report packet containing the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory, a retrospective questionnaire about the mother in her various roles, and the Children's Report of Parental Behavior Inventory. Results indicated that the women's primary role decision of career, work or homemaking did not parallel those of their mothers, but was related to their mothers' messages to them. Career women and women at home reported having more choice in their

decisions than did working women. Further, the career women's choices were more often influenced by teachers, especially female teachers. Finally, women's self-esteem and role satisfaction were significantly enhanced ($p<.05$) when the relationship with the mother was perceived as loving and accepting, with low hostility and low psychological control. In contrast, women's self-esteem and role satisfaction were generally unrelated to the retrospective reports of the mothers' roles and role satisfaction.

A woman's choice of a role at a particular life stage is intricately tied to both her developmental history and to the pressures of the social climate. Some women seek to develop careers, others participate in the work force, and still others choose to stay out of the working world and devote themselves to their families. Research suggests that a mother who works provides a different role model for her daughter and that maternal employment correlates with women's role preferences. That is, daughters of working mothers are more likely to want to work than daughters of non-working mothers (Almquist & Angrist, 1971; Hoffman, Nye, Bahr, Emlen, Perry, & Sobol, 1974; Nieva & Gutek, 1982). Further, it may be that daughters are more influenced by their mothers' feelings about their work (work role satisfaction) (Baruch, 1974; Hoffman, 1974), their mothers' endorsement of work (Baruch, 1972), and their mothers' job or career success than by their mothers' actual role choice (Baruch, 1972;

Bielby, 1978; Smith, 1980).

A mother may provide a model not only for her daughter's work role choice but also for the development of her self-esteem. Maternal employment may contribute to the self-esteem of daughters (Hoffman, 1974) in that it facilitates the development of a self-concept which contains fewer female stereotyped values (Broverman, Vogel, Broverman, Clarkson, & Rosenkrantz, 1972; Hoffman et al., 1974; Vogel, Broverman, Broverman, Clarkson & Rosenkrantz, 1970; Walker, 1982), although not all research substantiates this (Baruch, 1976; S.M. Miller, 1975; T.W. Miller, 1976).

Other factors contributing to self-esteem include the degree of maternal identification (Hollender, 1973; Jourard, 1957; Walker, 1982), other non-maternal role models (Almquist & Angrist, 1971; Walker, 1982), and the mother's own self-esteem and sense of competence (Baruch, 1976; Briggs, 1979). Additionally, maternal

childrearing behaviors seem to promote the development of self-esteem in children. Maternal acceptance and nurturance, less drastic forms of punishment and clearly defined and enforced limits of expected behavior have been positively related to the development of self-esteem (Coopersmith, 1967; Dickstein & Posner, 1978; Graybill, 1978; Miller, 1975), while the use of psychological pressure and control as childrearing behaviors have been negatively related to the development of self-esteem (Graybill, 1978).

In summary, then, studies in this field suggest potentially significant influences of the mother on both the daughter's role choices and self-esteem. However, most of these studies have confined their samples to young children and college students. While this has provided a great deal of information on feelings of competency, anticipated career choice and desired career commitment in young girls, it has

yielded less information on the actual role choices of women as adults.

This investigation seeks to extend previous research by studying adult women, in particular, married women with preschool children, who are at a developmental stage in which work role choices are most salient and relevant. Involved in the pressures of childrearing and child care, they will have been faced with making a choice between committing their efforts and energy full time to the home or committing simultaneously to their homelife and to their work or career. This is the time fewest women work so that earlier contributing factors might be relevant in understanding women's choices vis-à-vis the labor force. Impinging on these decisions will be pressures of the social climate, such as changing social norms with respect to family status and paid employment and historical-cohort factors, such as the influence of the feminist movement (Baltes & Drim, 1979; Stewart &

Platt, 1982).

The aspects of these women's lives examined, or the criterion variables, are (a) the women's primary adult roles; (b) the women's satisfaction in their primary roles; and (c) the women's self-esteem. Primary adult role is defined as the woman's current status in the labor force: career, work or homemaking. The concept of the sense of self, in this study, is comprised of the women's subjective feelings of satisfaction in their roles and their self-esteem. Antecedent variables - those potential earlier influences - are examined retrospectively to the time when the respondents were 16 years old. These are (a) the mothers' primary adult roles, that is, the mothers' status in the labor force; (b) the women's perceptions of their mothers' satisfaction in the primary adult roles; and (c) the women's perceptions of their relationship with their mothers, that is, their perceptions of their mothers' childrearing behaviors.

The retrospective variables are assessed at age 16 because traditionally this age is viewed as a psychological transition point in the development towards adulthood (Erikson, 1959).

It is hypothesized that the criterion variables are positively related to the antecedent variables. Thus, women will enact roles similar to those of their mothers. Moreover, they will feel positively about themselves (i.e., report satisfaction in their roles and a high self-esteem) when the relationship with their mothers has been positive and their mothers are perceived as having been satisfied in their roles.

Method

Subjects

The sample of 67 women was drawn from the New York ($\underline{N}$=40) and New Haven ($\underline{N}$=27) metropolitan and suburban areas and was recruited through daycare centers and neighborhood playgrounds and by referral.[1] To control for both cohort and life stage differences, women were

admitted into the study only if they met the following inclusion criteria: between 28 and 38 years old, married and living with their spouse, had at least one child (male or female) under 6 years old, completed at least 2 years of college and had lived in an intact family during most of their developmental years.

These inclusion criteria were established to insure a relatively homogeneous sample of middle to upper middle class married women with families. It was reasoned that such a group potentially would have the greatest economic freedom to make role choices and would be more legitimately afforded the decision to withdraw from or remain in the labor force.

Instruments

Self-esteem was measured via the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory, short form. This 25 item short version of the scale correlates .95 with the longer version. It has been extensively validated through its use with individuals of all age groups (Crandall,

1976).

The earlier mother-child relationship was measured by the Children's Report of Parental Behavior Inventory (CRPBI) (Schaefer, 1965a) from which three factors are identified (Schaefer, 1965b): acceptance versus rejection, psychological autonomy versus psychological control and firm control versus lax discipline. Alternatively, the CRPBI items can be factored, as in this study, into five dimensions: acceptance, rejection, psychological control, firm control and lax discipline.

Schaefer (1965a) advocates the use of children's reports of the parents' behaviors on the assumption that the perceptions of behavior rather than actual behaviors relate to psychological adjustment. The validity of the CRPBI as a retrospective measure was first established in a longitudinal study by Schaefer and Bayley (1967). In this study 27 mother-child dyads were followed over time. The mother-child relationship

was assessed by ratings of the interactions observed during the first 3 years of life, by an interview with the mother when the child was 9-14 years old and by adult reports (at approximately age 36) of maternal behavior retrospective to their adolescence. There were significant correlations ranging from .40 to .63 between the 9-14 year old ratings and the retrospective reports at maturity. The sizeable correlations reported between data collected at different time periods (adolescence versus adulthood), by different methods (interview versus self-report inventory) and from different respondents (mothers versus children) contribute to the validity of this scale as a retrospective measure. Further support for the CRPBI as a retrospective measure is found in the studies of Raskin, Boothe, Reatig, Schulterbrandt & Olde (1971) and Cooke, Raskin & Eliot (1981) in which reports of the earlier parent-child interactions differentiated depressed and non-depressed groups of adults.

Respondents' retrospective reports about their mothers' primary roles was obtained via a self-report questionnaire designed by the researchers. They were asked to describe the activities of the mother in her roles, and to evaluate such factors as the mother's role satisfaction, feelings about her role and role salience. Participants were asked to think back to when they were 16 years old in answering the mostly closed-ended questions of this self-report. Information about the mother's activities associated with her primary role was obtained in an open-ended manner while information about satisfaction and affect was quantified on a four point scale, ranging from 1, not at all, to 4, a great deal. For example, questions included, "At that time, how much satisfaction did you feel your mother derived from her homemaking activities?" and "How do you think your mother felt in her role as a worker ....Interested? Worthwhile?"

Information about mothers' impact on women's

primary role choices and about women's satisfaction with their current lives was collected via interview. The interview consisted of semi-structured questions with both open-ended and closed-ended responses. Inquiries were made into the women's primary role choices, the degree of choice exercised and the reasons for their choices. For example, women were asked, "Why did you choose to have a career/work/be a homemaker?", "To what extent do you feel you made a choice?" and "How did your mother influence your having a career/work/ being a homemaker?" Role satisfaction was assessed on a four point scale in response to the question, "How satisfied are you with your (primary role)?" In addition, women were asked, "What other people in your life had a major influence on your life choices?" Demographic data and past and current family history were also obtained in this interview.

Procedure

A post only, correlational design with three

groups was used, in which conditions of the participants' present lives were assessed and related to reports of past events.

Women were approached, informed of the nature of the study and invited to participate if they met inclusion criteria and gave their consent. Women were asked to identify their primary role choices and were assigned on the basis of their response into one of three mutually exclusive groups: (a) career, that is, committed to paid employment as a lifelong endeavor in a particular field with the intention of productivity and seeking advancement; (b) work, that is, engaged in paid employment which does not encompass the concept of career as described above and; (c) homemaking, that is, not working outside of the household. Although the homemakers were not engaged in paid employment, some reported doing volunteer work or sporadic paid work amounting to less than 15 hours per week. Such limited involvement in the labor force did not alter their

assignment to the homemaking category. In contrast, those women who worked 15 to 30 hours at a job or career were considered part-time working or career women. In this study full-time employment was defined as working more than 30 hours per week.

All participants were given a self-report packet containing the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory, the Self-Report Questionnaire and the CRPBI to be completed at home before the interview. The interview was conducted within two weeks of the initial contact and took approximately one hour.

Data was collected by two interviewers and there was greater than 99 percent agreement on co-rated interviews. Coding categories were established which most accurately and concisely captured the nature of the actual responses. For example, some of the categories derived in response to the question concerning why women chose their current role were (a) economic necessity, (b) economic independence, (c)

being taken for granted or assumed, (d) self-enhancement and (e) because of children. Due to the large number of open-ended questions and the subjective judgments inherent in the coding of such information, all data were coded independently by two raters and any differences in coding were resolved by consensus.

Results

Characteristics of the Sample

Within this heterogeneously drawn sample there were few differences among the career (N=28), work (N=12) and home (N=27) groups on demographic characteristics. The average respondent was 33 years old, Caucasian and American-born. Religious affiliations were distributed so that she was just as likely to be Catholic, Jewish or Protestant. The number of children per household ranged from one to five with an average of 1.67. The total number of

children a woman had was not associated with whether she was a worker, homemaker or in a career. Women's occupations were consistent with their self-assignment; that is, career women were primarily categorized as major professionals, and working women were predominantly categorized as semi-professionals or technical workers. The last held occupations of the women at home were in the major and minor professional categories so that they were more similar in occupation to career women than to workers. Almost three-quarters (70.4 percent) of the homemakers held a career or high level position prior to the change in role to a full-time homemaker. Eighty-four percent of the homemakers expressed their intention to return to work in the future.

Despite the relative similarities across the three groups, several differences were found. Career women and full-time homemakers were of a higher socioeconomic status (SES) than workers, as derived by the

Hollingshead Four Factor Index of Social Class (1975).[2] While most of the respondents held college degrees, the workers were most likely to have acquired partial college training and only career women and homemakers obtained graduate degrees. The career women and homemakers were, for the most part, married to professionals as compared to workers, whose husbands were just as often semi-professionals as professionals. While the husband was typically the primary wage earner, 22 percent of the career women and 33 percent of the working women were classified as the primary wage earner.

Juxtaposed to these current demographic differences, the women's families of origin were generally homogeneous across the sample. Most of the women were raised with siblings and approximately one-third each were first, middle and youngest born. The women in the three groups did not differ significantly on father's SES or on mother's

demographic characteristics.

Retrospective classification of the mother's primary role at the daughter's sixteenth year revealed that 65.7 percent of the mothers were classified as housewives, 15.0 percent as career women and 19.4 percent as workers. The mothers were generally less educated than the respondents, so that while some mothers had advanced degrees many had not completed high school. The mothers who worked were most likely to be semi-professionals and, for the most part (91.7 percent), held positions outside the home.

Women's Role Choices

Women in all three groups were equally likely to have had mothers who had a career, who worked or who were homemakers. Contrary to prediction, there was no direct relationship between the women's primary adult role choices and their mothers' primary roles (χ^2 (4)=2.72, p = n.s.). Furthermore, women's adult role choices were not directly related to reports of the

earlier relationships with their mothers as assessed by the CRPBI ($F(2,64) = .70$, p = n.s.).

However, career women and homemakers reported that their primary roles were predominantly a matter of personal choice while the working women's choices were guided by situational factors, most often economic necessity ($\chi^2(2) = 21.40$, $p<.01$). Distinctly different reasons for their primary role choices were given by these three groups of women. Career women reported working most often for enhancement of their self-worth and sense of self (46.4 percent), because of the underlying assumption that they would grow up to have a career (17.9 percent), or because work was an economic necessity (14.3 percent). Women holding non-career jobs most often reported working for financial reasons (50 percent), because it enhanced their sense of self (25 percent), or because of the non-economic advantages of the job (16.7 percent), such as intellectual stimulation or opportunity for diverse social contact.

Women at home chose to stay at home to raise or be involved with their children (70.4 percent) or to break from a previous role (11.1 percent).

The mothers' impact on these women's primary role choices, rather than being direct, may then have been indirect since the respondents reported having been influenced by their mothers' implicit expectations or messages (see Figure 1).

Insert Figure 1 about here

Career women were more likely to perceive their mothers' endorsement of work as a means of doing something with their lives, rather than just being able to support themselves. Working women perceived their mothers' messages as emphasizing the financial necessities of life, implying that they should be able to have a job in order to support themselves. Among the women at home only a small number perceived their

mothers as actually encouraging them to do something with their lives but a much larger number of these women perceived their mothers as positive role models. Therefore, for the women at home the exemplary function of the mother rather than their mothers' verbal endorsements seemed important.

Workers perceived their mothers as negative role models more often than the career women while none of the women at home perceived their mothers as such. In each group there were women who regarded their mothers as having no influence on their role choices of career, work and home. With regard to maternal influence, then, there is some indication that the women in each group are affected by different messages.

The impact of the mother is not always direct and is often not acknowledged. Thus, when women were specifically asked who had had the most impact on their life choices, 37.3 percent credited their mothers, 25.4 percent credited themselves, 11.9 percent cited their

husbands, and 10.4 percent named their fathers as the single most influential person. No significant differences were found among the career women, working women or homemakers on this variable.

Among people mentioned as having some, although not a primary, influence on women's life choices were sisters, female friends and other female role models. Career women attributed importance to their teachers as role models while working women and women at home were less likely to name teachers as influential ($X^2(2) = 13.14$, $p<.01$). When career women did mention teachers, they were more likely to refer to female teachers (25 percent) than to both male and female teachers (14.3 percent), or to male teachers alone (10.7 percent).

The results so far indicate that the women in this study are making different primary role choices than their mothers, that they are guided by implicit messages from their mothers and that mothers are significant influences on their lives, although other

figures are also important. Moreover, current personal, economic and social factors in these women's lives direct their primary role choices.

Women's Role Satisfaction

Career women were more satisfied with their primary roles (M = 3.32) than either the working women (M = 2.50) or women at home (M = 2.52) (F (2,64) = 9.01, p = .001). It was hypothesized that women's satisfaction in their primary adult roles would relate positively to their mothers' primary roles, to the reports of their mothers' satisfaction in their primary roles and to the perception of their relationships with their mothers. A multiple regression analysis - the classical approach - (Nie, Hull, Jenkins, Steinbrenner & Bent, 1975) was performed using women's satisfaction in the career, work or homemaking role as the criterion variable. This criterion variable was then converted to standardized scores. Women's education was controlled for in the analyses because it was the only

variable which was correlated with outcome measures and which differed significantly across groups.

The multiple regression analysis revealed that the women's perceptions of their relationships with their mothers was the single most important factor associated with the women's current satisfaction in their primary roles (F (1,61) = 5.66, p<.05). Neither the mothers' primary roles nor the reports of the mothers' satisfaction in their primary roles related to the women's current role satisfaction. There were no interaction effects (see Table 1).

Insert Table 1 about here

A closer look at the quality of the women's relationship with their mothers indicates that the love, hostility and psychological control factors of the CRPBI correlate with the women's primary role satisfaction whether it be in a career, job or at home.

The correlations with the love scale were positive (r = .28, $p<.05$) while those with the hostility and psychological control scales were negative (r = -.37, $p<$ .01; r = -.36, $p<.01$, respectively). Therefore, the more love, acceptance and warmth and the less hostility and psychological control characterizing the mother-daughter relationship, the greater the adult women's role satisfaction. The CRPBI scales of firm control and lax discipline generally did not contribute to the women's role satisfaction.

Women's Self-Esteem

Women's self-esteem ratings were significantly different across the three groups. Career women scored the highest on the 25 point Coopersmith Self-Esteem Scale (M = 20.4), while workers scored next (M = 18.2) and homemakers had the lowest self-esteem scores (M = 17.5) ($F(2.64) = 4.27$, $p = .02$). Collapsed across groups, women's self-esteem significantly and positively related to satisfaction in their primary

role (r = .34, p = .005).

It was predicted that women's self-esteem would be positively associated with their mothers' primary roles, with the reports of their mothers' role satisfaction and with the perception of their relationships with their mothers. A multiple regression analysis controlling for women's education was conducted. Once again, it was the mother-daughter relationship as assessed by the CRPBI summed score which was significantly associated with the criterion variable, women's self-esteem ($F(1,61)=4.18$, $p<.05$). No significant effects were found either for mothers' primary roles or for the reports of mothers' primary role satisfaction, nor were there interaction effects (see Table 1).

In examining more closely how the daughter's self-esteem related to perceptions of her relationship with her mother, it was found that only the CRPBI hostility scale contributes significantly to

self-esteem (r= .33, p= .007). Thus, the less hostility perceived to characterize the mother-daughter relationship, the greater the women's self-esteem. Although there were no significant relationships between self-esteem and the love and psychological control scales of the CRPBI, there were findings in the expected direction (r =.20, p =.11 and r =.18, p =.15, respectively). The CRPBI scales of firm control and lax discipline did not contribute to the women's self-esteem. Thus it would seem that the factors which contribute to the development of women's sense of self are found within the psychological interactions and in the affective tone which predominates the mother-daughter relationship rather than in the parent's disciplinary interventions.

In summary, this sample of married women with preschoolers who were career women or homemakers reported that their primary roles were a matter of choice, while working women's choices were more

constrained by situational factors. Second, these women's primary role choices were found not to parallel those of their mothers. Third, the women in the three groups reported different kinds of messages from their mothers about their life choices. Fourth, the earlier mother-daughter relationship was strongly related to the daughters' sense of self. Specifically, women's self-esteem and primary role satisfaction were reported to be enhanced by a relationship with the mother which was perceived as loving and accepting, with low hostility and low psychological control. Fifth, although the daughters' perceptions of their mothers' attitudes and of the relationship with their mother appear to influence the daughters' self-esteem and role satisfaction, they do not directly influence their primary role choice.

Discussion

Parenting behavior has been shown to contribute to the development of self-esteem in children

(Coopersmith, 1967; Graybill, 1978) and to a positive self-concept. A positive self-regard in turn facilitates identity formation as well as other personality characteristics. For example, Baruch (1976) found that daughters' self-esteem is closely tied to feelings of autonomy and competence. This achievement of autonomy and competence may be related to what Stewart (1980) refers to as "self-definition" in women. She found that participation in a career or job within the constraints of marriage and children was related to such self-definition. The more self-defined the woman, the more innovative she was in establishing freelance activity within the home.

While a woman's identity and the more continuous aspects of the self such as attitudes and self-esteem develop within the realm of the mother-daughter relationship, this study finds that the expression of this identity appears to be guided by more current exogenous factors. Although daughters of working

mothers are most likely to report a desire to work (Almquist & Angrist, 1971; Hoffman et al., 1974; Nieva & Gutek, 1982), in this sample of women, the mother's work role choice does not relate to the adult daughter's work role choice. Women in all three groups (career women, workers and women at home) were equally likely to have career, work or homemaker mothers. Thus, the identification with the mother is not necessarily expressed in the choice of a similar role but lies within the attitudes toward roles and sense of self. This finding that women's primary role choices do not parallel those of their mothers was also noted recently by Rollins and White (1982). This may reflect cultural trends evolving away from traditional norms for women to predominantly choose the homemeaking role while rearing their children. Some indication of these trends are additionally found in U.S. government statistics which show that 5.1 million mothers of preschoolers participated in the work force in 1981

compared to 2.5 million in 1960 (U.S. Bureau Census, 1981).

In this study women reported that the decision to enact their primary roles was predominantly influenced by social, economic and situational constraints. The working women's choices were constrained by financial necessity which coexisted with their husbands' relatively lower occupational status as compared to husbands of the other two groups. Furthermore, although working women had social class backgrounds in their families of origin similar to the other two groups of women, they achieved fewer years of education and lower status occupations in the work place.

An important finding was that what the mother said rather than what she did was influential in guiding primary role choices. For example, the career women reported being influenced by explicit messages from their mothers to "do something with their lives" and to pursue a work role with less emphasis on the possible

eventuality of having to support themselves. Thus, the mothers' attitudes about what the daughters should do appear to influence the daughters' primary role choices.

There is also evidence that women's choices of primary role were influenced by significant others who served as role models. Although the mother was mentioned most frequently by all three groups as the individual with the greatest influence on their adult life choices of marriage, family and primary role, other individuals of importance were fathers, spouses, sisters, female friends and other female role models. The importance of role models has been addressed in the work of Tangri (1972), Johnson and Jaccard (1980), Walker (1982), and Stewart et al. (1982), who found that parents, husbands and boyfriends are significant role models for women.

Almquist and Angrist (1971) were among the first researchers to find that teachers were significant role

models for career-oriented males and females, but they did not differentiate the sex of the teacher. In the current study, career women (in contrast to the other two groups) were most likely to mention teachers, and most often female teachers, as significant role models influencing their life choices.

Finally, the women reported themselves, second only to their mothers, as having had the most impact on their life choices. Given the importance of the earlier mother-daughter relationship in the development of self-esteem and attitudes toward life choices, this finding suggests an additional but indirect impact of the mother on the daughter's adult role choices.

The fact that the study design is partially retrospective should be taken into account with respect to women's perceptions of their mothers' attitudes about primary role choices. It is possible that career women might distort the reports of their mothers' messages in a direction supporting their decision to

have a career, whereas workers might bias their reports to justify their working for economic reasons. If such retrospective distortion occurred, women at home would similarly distort their mothers' messages. In fact, however, homemakers do not report their mothers' verbal endorsement of the home role but, instead, emphasize the positive examples their mothers set. Furthermore, there was no consistent evidence throughout the data to suggest retrospective bias.

Although this study succeeded in establishing three relatively homogeneous and mutually exclusive groups of women (career, work, home), it failed to achieve homogeneity in educational level. Statistical control of this variable yielded no significant change in the results. It would be of interest to know whether this variation in educational level is intrinsic to the study sample or represents a real finding. Was it marriage to a man with a lower status occupation that contributed to the working women's

lower educational achievements (such that she had to work rather than finish college) or did her relatively lower achievement relate to other factors that made marriage to a less successful man more likely?

The manner in which participants were recruited tended to select for upper and middle class women in order to optimize recruiting women with preschool children who would have the greatest economic freedom to make a choice between roles. Thus, generalizations of the study's findings should be limited to this group. Future studies using a randomly drawn sample encompassing all social classes might clarify some of these results as well as provide further knowledge of how the effects of the earlier mother-daughter relationship are expressed when women have limited personal and economic freedom.

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Footnotes

[1]The Connecticut sample was primarily recruited through a private day care center in a middle and upper middle class community. The New York sample was primarily recruited at playgrounds in middle and upper middle class neighborhoods. A smaller percentage in each locale was referred by participants.

[2]These SES ratings were based on educational and occupational levels. The last held position was used to derive occupational levels for women at home.

Table 1

Multiple Regression Summary Table

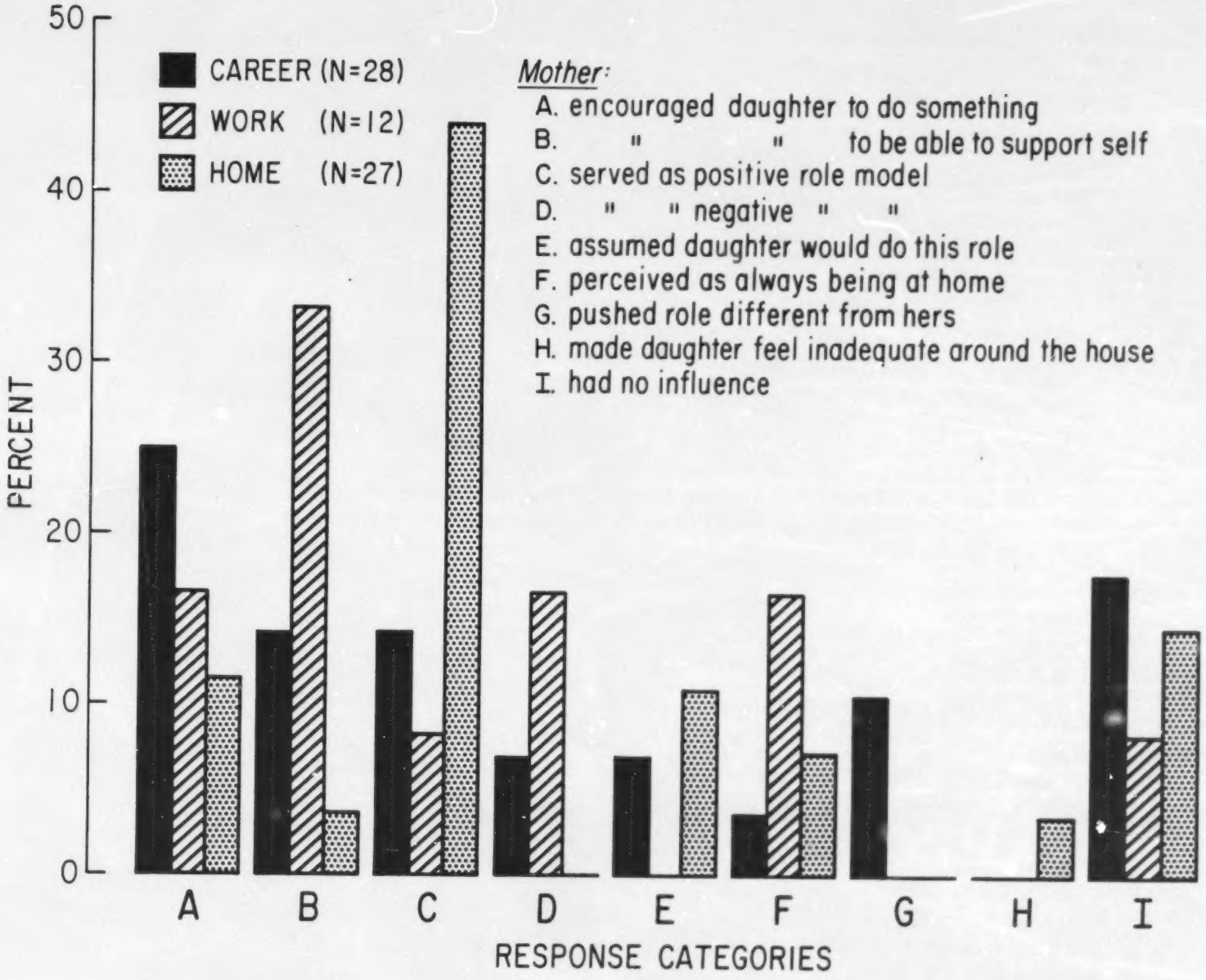
	Criterion Variables							
	Women's Primary Role Satisfaction				Women's Self-Esteem			
Predictor Variables	r	β	MS	F	r	β	MS	F
Education	-.216	.163	2.262	3.180	-.004	.784	.014	.001
Mother-Daughter Relationship (CRPBI)	.347	-.312	4.501	6.772*	-.220	-.255	66.347	4.176*
Mother's Primary Role Satisfaction	-.102	-.057	.148	.222	.145	.207	42.738	2.690
Mother's Primary Role	a	a	.354	.533	a	a	17.995	1.133
Mean Square Residual			.664[b]				15.887[b]	

[a]No correlation or beta coefficient for categorical variables. [b]df (1,61).

*p <.05, two-tailed.

Figure Caption

Figure 1. Women's perceptions of mothers' impact on primary role choices.


50
40
30
20
10
0
PERCENT
CAREER (N=28)
WORK (N=12)
HOME (N=27)
Mother:
A. encouraged daughter to do something
B. " " to be able to support self
C. served as positive role model
D. " " negative " "
E. assumed daughter would do this role
F. perceived as always being at home
G. pushed role different from hers
H. made daughter feel inadequate around the house
I. had no influence
A
B
C
D
E
F
G
H
I
RESPONSE CATEGORIES